

Oct. 30, '84

Dear Sarah,

I was so glad to hear from you. We gave a big reception for ~~320~~ 380 Dutch people, and vipākas were so different. People were smiling and giving us flowers and then something happened. An old man had a heart attack, and it was such a commotion, a shock for everyone. He went sick over the sofa and then was laid at the floor. Two dokters were among the guests. I knew, because shortly before I had asked one dokter, what his profession was and thus we could call out his name. The sick person was transported to the hospital where he died. ~~xxxx~~ After the reception was over Lodewijk went to the hospital and then to the widow. Different vipākas/ .

At the moment I still have a cook and two other people, it is a big house. But the cook will marry, probably in May. It cannot last like it is now. Therefore I use my time well and write as much as I can. I do not know what the situation later on will be, it may be less favorable.

You are wondering whether physical health is also favorable for sati. At the moment I am reading in Pali, but with the English translation next to it, the commentary to the satipatthana sutta: It is said that by reason of their country being blessed with a perfect climate and through their enjoyment of other comfortable conditions were always healthy in body and in mind. They, happy with healthy minds and bodies and having the power of knowledge, were capable of receiving deep teachings.

Thus, bodily health is a condition, but not the only one. And the fact whether one is healthy or not is conditioned as well, nobody can have health at will.

I do not know yet when the Sri Lanka trip will be, Khun ^u ng did not write about it in her last letter.

I corrected a lot in my cetasiḱas and made a lot of type-ins, which I had no time to send you yet, but I will. I retyped half pages when it became too messy. It is good as you also have a complete copy, since for the moment I do not know where and when there will be conditions for printing. We can contribute money to it, but I think I would have to know first that the printing is about to start. What is Jonothan's opinion in this matter?

You wrote about the giving of alcoholic drinks to others. This was just a matter which came up here. It is custom in Vienna that all Ambassadors give liquor to police and others at Christmas. I am not happy to do this. It is certainly not kusala, to encourage others to drink. But here again, when not a sotapanna it is not possible to keep sila in all its purity. But I cannot buy the bottles myself anyway, since they are so many I just could not carry it myself. Lodewijk would have to do it. I always have left drinks and so to him. Khun Sujin spoke once to me about serving wine to guests, and I understood that it is something that is expected, and one cannot stop others from drinking anyway. I would like to know what Jonothan thinks, he always has such a good and clear judgement I think. I was considering all the

these things when I received your letter, where you wrote:

' it all depends on conditions and one can only get to know one's citta better...there can be a lot of dosa and fear involved in this area...very easy to justify why one does not give (drinks) and tell others what they should or should not do rather than just set a good example and discuss one's reasons for abstinence when asked.... when we are in the sort of situations you have in mind (for example with my brothers in the pub), then if one develops more awareness of the citta involved when one either buys or doesn't buy the drinks, rather than following a long, confused story about the rights and wrongs, then I think it will be easier. We shouldn't aim for perfection without following the slow steps of understanding...this way conditions can naturally make our lives easier....'

End quote of your letter, very good, Sarah. Again, we all are ~~incl~~ inclined to think of a whole situation, instead of being aware of different realities as they appear. That is why Khun Sujin usually would answer: 'Just be aware'. We want to ~~pinp~~ pinpoint everything and have a clearcut answer for everything.

You asked about climate being upanissaya paccaya. Upanissaya paccaya is very wide, actually there are three classes of this paccaya, and I will go into more detail when I start writing about the paccayas, conditions. In connection with this you asked about sappaya sampajañña, and this is knowing what is suitable for oneself, both physically and mentally, knowing what is beneficial. As to upanissaya, ~~th~~ these are phenomena which condition other phenomena. The conditioned phenomena can be kusala, akusala, or ~~ayyakata~~ ^{avyakata} dhamma. Kusala can be pakatupanissaya (pakati is what naturally arises) for akusala. You perform kusala, but then you get so tired and you get aversion. Or kusala in the past conditions kusala now.

You asked me for comments on the problems your parents are having, and mentioned that you want to help, although they are far from Hongkong, in England. What are our citta like when we want to help? Very different ones. Is there not ~~an~~ a tendency of wanting others to react to your advice in the way you would like it? Wanting result? We think mostly in the way of concepts, of stories and people, and we want them to be this way or that way. And I, I, I, want to be the one who helps. Are there moments we feel ourselves a little important while helping others? Then we are 'somebody'. It sounds contradictory, but the less one thinks of 'people', the more one can help 'people'. Because when there is awareness now, and now, and now, there are conditions for speaking more helpful words and ~~more~~ acting in a more helpful way, with less selfishness, less clinging to results. One is also more relaxed.

Kind regards, also from Lodowijk,

Nina.